

From: Russell Schoof
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 4:39pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

This message is to express my opposition to the proposed settlement of the Microsoft antitrust case. My opposition is based on two primary concerns:

1. I see nothing in the settlement that will have the practical effect of restraining Microsoft from continuing its predatory monopolistic practices. I am particularly concerned that those who currently provide the only credible competition to Microsoft in operating systems -- Open Source developers of products such as Linux and FreeBSD -- receive no protection whatsoever. Does the Department of Justice actually believe that Microsoft will not direct the immense power of its many billions of dollars at these projects in order to destroy them?
2. Giving Microsoft software to schools will further its monopoly by allowing the company to do precisely what it is not supposed to do: give away its software and thereby drive away competition (from Apple, which currently has a substantial share of the educational market), and later force the schools to pay to upgrade to future versions.

I have been a user of Microsoft productivity and development software for fourteen years, and I have made a living from it as an independent consultant. I am now in the process of moving myself and as many of my clients as I can to non-Microsoft products. I do so because the other software is of higher quality and value, and because I have grown to despise this company that does all it can to lock users into its increasingly mediocre products, then extorts money from them by forcing an unending stream of unnecessary upgrades. In dealing with the company as a customer, I have become convinced that Microsoft management is, in the end, interested solely in money and the power that large quantities of it brings to gain ever more.

- Russell Schoof
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